

## **Recycling and Refuse Management Committee**

### **Minutes from 6/4/09 meeting**

**Present:** Meg Vickery, Chair; Susan Waite, DPW Liaison; Sterling Bush; Marianne Lorenzelli; Greg Keochakian; Lucy McMurrer.

March minutes approved with no changes.

#### Meeting Effectiveness Survey

Susan discussed the results of the on-line meeting effectiveness survey. Various ideas were discussed for making the RRMC a more effective committee. Regarding no. 1 "Goals of Group," creating a "new member packet" with the committee's charter, member contact information and their start dates on the committee, and past minutes might be useful. Also, having an annual review of goals could help. Regarding no. 2, "Sufficient Notice of Meetings," Susan has begun sending out a notice just after each meeting listing what each member has committed to before the next meeting and she sends out another notice just before the next month's meeting. Regarding no. 3, action items will be included to remind people of various jobs they've signed up for. The committee decided that meetings should last 1-1.5 hours and begin as soon as a quorum is reached. Other ideas were discussed to help members stay on track about topics and having clear and agreed upon goals. It is hoped that with these new ideas and methods, the committee will be even more effective and positive both in its meetings and in reaching its goals.

#### 2010 Amherst "green" Event

It was decided that the Sustainable Energy Fair (SEF), Arbor Day, and Earth Day will all be celebrated in Amherst next year on 4/24/10 on the Common (both the North and South Common are reserved). Under this scenario, the last stand-alone Sustainable Energy Fair will be this fall. By combining all these events into one green event, we hope to pool our resources, volunteer and part-time workers, and have a more holistic approach. The Chamber is also willing to support a large single event than several smaller ones.

#### Amherst Chamber of Commerce Green Subcommittee

A new Chamber subcommittee has formed focused on greening Amherst and leveraging Amherst's green-ness to attract visitors and tourism. Susan asked if someone would be willing to participate as an RRMC liaison to this Green Subcommittee. Greg said he would look into it.

#### Transfer Station Update

A DPW construction coordinator is now involved with this. Building code regulations must be taken into account. The DPW coordinator will check on permits and structural changes needed. Sterling said \$500 will ensure the book shed roof is done. Fund-raising is underway. Both Steve Telega and Guilford are ok with voluntary separation of can deposits temporarily being donated to the cause until the funds are raised.

#### Styrofoam Ban Update

Susan and Lucy met in May to determine next steps. There is a contact in Seattle who Susan will use for questions and resources. She will also talk to the owners of Cushman Market for Styrofoam alternatives. Meg will talk to people at Portobello and ask how much using tinfoil costs. We will look at Seattle's Styrofoam ban bylaw and check in with Guilford to see if what we have drafted is the most effective way to move the project forward here in Amherst.

#### Health Regulation Changes

The proposed changes are in good shape, and need only approval from key decision-makers before being presented to the Board of Health (BOH). Susan will get input from the Health Dept's sanitarians, and get on the next possible BOH meeting agenda. Sterling mentioned again that Duseau Trucking owes the town money and

they're still doing business here. As Susan is unable to speak to the issue, she said that she would invite Guilford to our next meeting to discuss this.

#### Downtown Recycling

The recycling trailer will arrive in the next couple of weeks. The challenge is that the grant proposal stated that the trailer would make downtown recycling possible as well as be used for events on the Common. Because of tough budget issues, Guilford is not willing to initiate public recycling downtown at this time. This is a huge disappointment to the Committee, as downtown recycling has been on the radar screen now for over four years. The Committee would like to get with Guilford to create a plan to make downtown recycling happen. Meanwhile, Sterling suggested highlighting a staged approach in the grant project report, and emphasize to the grant-givers that we're at stage one. Susan will send out a press release about the trailer and its debut at the Taste of Amherst. It could also be used to build relationships with downtown businesses (offer to take their container recycling once a month?) and as the foundation for a parade float.

#### News & New Business

- The Ultimate Frisbee Invitational Tournament coordinators requested help with recycling at their event, but we do not have public event bins available. Susan was able to borrow some from Franklin County. There is a chance that we can use some funds from a sustainable energy grant to purchase some durable, portable event recycling containers.
- Taste of Amherst volunteers are needed. Recycling bins need to be found for this event as well.
- Whitson letters of commendation for Trash-Free Lunch Day were all signed and sent out.
- Composters now cost \$40 (up from \$35).
- The Town's 250<sup>th</sup> parade is in September. Do we want to be part of it? Maybe talk to the ARHS environmental committee or Girl/Boy Scouts of America?
- The changes to the state bottle bill will include water and juice bottles to be redeemed for cash. Susan passed around a handout about this and urged committee members to call their state representatives and senators to encourage passage of this bill.
- Another state bill proposed is one that gives electronics product designers and manufacturers responsibility for a product's end of life (including appropriate disposal).
- The RRMC is looking for a new secretary/minutes taker. Lucy would like to step down from the job and is hoping to find a replacement soon.

#### Recycling Coordinator's Report

- Wildwood Head Custodian Tom Walsh attended a quarterly regional municipal recycling coordinator meeting with Susan this morning. The topic was school recycling and overcoming associated barriers. Tom was one of the round table speakers.
- We managed to sell all 60 Wrap-N-Mat reusable sandwich wraps as part of Trash Free Lunch Day at the elementary schools. We met the zero-cost-to-DPW goal and (if one ignores DPW labor utilized) actually made a \$70 "profit."
- Last week two solar trash compacting garbage bins were installed downtown. The units were purchased with sustainable energy grant money from the MA Technology Collaborative and have a capacity 5x greater than existing garbage bins.

**Due to Independence Day weekend, the next committee meeting is postponed to the *second Thursday of July (the 9<sup>th</sup>) at 4:30.***

Meeting adjourned 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy McMurrer